

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RON KLEIN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 27, 2009

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to submit a record of how I would have voted on October 26, 2009. Had I voted, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall No. 814 and "aye" on rollcall No. 815.

WATER POLITICS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

HON. MIKE QUIGLEY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 27, 2009

Mr. QUIGLEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today because a water crisis threatens to destabilize Iraq and the entire Middle East.

Iraqi leaders warn that disaster areas suffering from the water crisis, like Basra, provide a breeding ground for insurgents.

Refugees fleeing the water crisis have deserted their homes and constitute the biggest movement of Iraqi refugees since the Iran war of the 1980s. The Iraqi military has had to intervene, and it's only a matter of time before the water crisis becomes a security crisis that imperils regional peace.

Just how serious is this water crisis?

The Euphrates River, which once supported empires in the cradle of civilization, is now barely fit for human use. In some areas it's "A slick black ooze, fit only for scores of bathing water buffalo." In other areas, salinity levels have risen so high that towns have been evacuated, their citizens unable to drink the fetid water.

In Basra, for example, low water levels in the Tigris and Euphrates have brought salt water rushing in from the Persian Gulf. Rising salinity levels threaten the viability of local agriculture so much that Amer Suleiman, Basra's agriculture director, will soon declare Basra a "disaster area" and warns that "if things continue to deteriorate there is no hope for Basra to recover."

What can be done about Iraq's water crisis? What can be done to replenish the Tigris and Euphrates?

The first solution is to reform Iraq's careless water management system.

Nibras al Mamouri, a professor of water resources at Baghdad's College of Agriculture, says "poor irrigation techniques and a lack of incentives to stop wasting so much water" are partly to blame for the current shortage.

The second solution, an international solution, reminds us that a water crisis in Iraq has consequences for the entire Middle East.

The Iraqi government, rightly or wrongly, has blamed the water crisis on its neighbors, principally Turkey and Syria but also Iran.

To resolve the water crisis, Iraq must negotiate a more equitable water sharing agreement—

(1) With Turkey, which controls the headwaters of both rivers—

(2) With Syria, through which the rivers pass—

(3) And with Iran, which controls two other rivers—the Karun and the Karkheh—that feed into the Faw Peninsula and Basra.

Turkey, Syria, and Iraq, responding to the water crisis, met earlier this month in Ankara to discuss a solution. But little has been achieved so far—neither Turkey nor Syria has been particularly sympathetic to Iraq, especially since each faces its own water shortage.

The difficulty of reaching an agreement underscores the unique diplomatic challenge posed by water politics. River water cannot belong to only one country because it flows between many countries. This is complicated by the fact that water flows in only one direction, and that upstream countries affect water levels downstream, but not vice versa.

Turkey, for example, which controls the headwaters of both the Tigris and the Euphrates, can control water flows to downstream countries, such as Syria and Iraq. Syria and Iraq begin any water negotiation with Turkey at an a priori disadvantage. But without greater Turkish cooperation, water shortages could spell disaster for Syrian and Iraqi agriculture, and spillover effects could destabilize the region.

The planned Ilisu dam, to be built on the Turkish part of the Tigris, is especially controversial in Iraq, which has already accused Turkey of choking the Euphrates with hydroelectric dams.

Some Iraqi leaders even suggest that water is being used as a weapon against Iraq and threaten war.

Tayseer al Mashadani, an Iraqi member of parliament, warns that "Iraq's water crisis . . . could lead us into war with one of our neighbors. The new war on Iraq is a war of water." But, before we accept the inevitability of war, we should reflect on words from the late Senator Simon: "Water," he said "can be a catalyst for war and can also create peace between nations."

In the Middle East we have an extraordinary opportunity to make cooperative water sharing serve the cause of peace.

Our voice carries a lot of weight in the region, and we should use that weight to support a water sharing agreement between Iraq, Turkey, Iran, and Syria.

The consequences of failure are too great.

IN MEMORY OF MR. JOSEPH A. MANENTE

HON. TIM RYAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 27, 2009

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Madam Speaker, it is with deep sadness that I inform the House of the death of Mr. Joseph A. Manente of Girard, Ohio.

GIRARD—Joseph A. Manente, 74, died Sunday, Sept. 20, 2009, at St. Elizabeth Health Center in Youngstown.

He was born June 13, 1935, in Girard, a son of Carmen and Gabriella Carson Manente.

He was a veteran of the U.S. Army and a member of St. Rose Church, Girard.

He retired from the Girard Post Office.

He is survived by his wife, Betty Miller Manente; two children, Lisa Manente Leschinsky of Girard and Greg of Hartford; two brothers, Anthony Manente of Austintown and Sam Manente of Mineral Ridge, and three grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by five brothers and sisters.

Calling hours will be from 5 to 8 p.m. Wednesday at McClurkin Funeral Home, Girard.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be held at 11 a.m. Thursday at St. Rose Church with prayers at 10:30 at the funeral home.

Interment will be at Girard City Cemetery.

RECOGNIZING MICHAEL P. SULLIVAN AS THE CHAUTAUQUA LEADERSHIP NETWORK'S 2009 LEADERSHIP AWARD RECIPIENT

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 27, 2009

Mr. HIGGINS. Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure today to recognize my friend, Michael P. Sullivan, the Director of Institution Relations and Public Affairs at Chautauqua Institution, as the recipient of Chautauqua Leadership Network's 2009 Leadership Award.

The Chautauqua Leadership Network's mission is to identify and nurture regional leaders. They provide a framework for an emerging network of skilled civic trustees and help the community to meet the challenges of today and the opportunities of tomorrow.

The Chautauqua Leadership Network's Leadership Award is given to the person whose activities have done the most to further the mission of the Chautauqua Leadership Network; and there is no question that Mr. Sullivan is a commendable choice. His professional undertakings have had a profoundly positive effect on Chautauqua County.

Since 1998, Mr. Sullivan has been responsible for all marketing, public relations, and communication activities for the Chautauqua Institution. He previously worked as Director of Public Relations and Marketing at Highland Hospital in Rochester. As a member of the Public Relations Society of America, Mr. Sullivan earned his APR (Accredited in Public Relations) and served as president of the Rochester Chapter of Delegates to the PRSA National Assembly.

I would like to congratulate Mike for achieving this honor. I am pleased and honored to recognize Mr. Sullivan as the recipient of the Chautauqua Leadership Network's 2009 Leadership Award. This award honors Michael's years of guidance, leadership, and devotion to not only the Institution, but Chautauqua County as well.

CONGRATULATING KRISTINE WALTER AND DARREN ROSE

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 27, 2009

Mr. RADANOVICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate and honor both Kristine Walter and Darren Rose for their past and present role in Leadership Fresno. Kristine Walter is the current chairman of this worthy, community-building organization, and Darren Rose was elected the incoming chairman beginning in July 2010.